

Book and Film News

ISSN 0003-4827

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Recommended Citation

"Book and Film News." *The Annals of Iowa* 41 (1973), 1204-1206.

Available at: <https://doi.org/10.17077/0003-4827.11146>

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George S. Mills, longtime political and legislative reporter for the *Des Moines Register and Tribune*, has given us a fascinating history of Iowa in *Rogues and Heroes from Iowa's Amazing Past* (Iowa State University Press, 1972). The book is a collection of stories about Iowa and its people. It reveals Mills' insight into the impact of personalities on events. He covers such topics and events as the displacement of the Indians, the great wars, the effects of technological advancement on Iowa's communities, the struggles by ethnic groups to attain their rights, the rise of women's rights movements, the growing pains of railroads and highways, and the growth and perils of early education. In a city-by-city approach Mills relates a series of vignettes that, taken together, comprise an informative narrative of Iowa history. *Rogues and*

Heroes From Iowa's Amazing Past is attractively illustrated by Frank Miller, and also contains many photographs that are history in themselves. It sells for \$5.95.

American Axes by Henry J. Kauffman (The Stephen Greene Press, Brattleboro, Vermont, 1972) is an illustrated story of the rapid evolution of man's chief tool since prehistoric times, precipitated by the necessity of clearing land for farms and homes in the vast North American wilderness. *American Axes* was written by one of the leading collectors and authorities in the field of toolmaking. Photographs accompanying the text illustrate and identify the great variety of North American axes dating from the Colonial period to the present. Drawings and diagrams detail the construction and production of basic types, such as the American felling or chopping axe, and two styles of hewing axe—the goosewing and the broadaxe. The book also contains a unique roster of all known American axe manufacturers since the Eighteenth Century, a glossary, and notes on the care and use of axes.

For additional information write the Stephen Greene Press, Box 1000, Brattleboro, Vermont, 05301.

An American in the Army and YMCA, 1917-1920, The Diary of David Lee Shillinglaw, edited by Glen E. Holt (University of Chicago Press, 1972), is a biographical account that illuminates the temper of the World War I era in ways more accurate than those achieved by many scholarly studies. Holt has edited Shillinglaw's diary, supplementing its contents with letters and interviews, making it an intimate narrative of one man's reaction to the stress of war, as well as a valuable addition to the story of the YMCA's activities in France.

David L. Shillinglaw spent his childhood in the town of Independence, Iowa and on a farm nearby. He attended Iowa State Teacher's College and graduated from the University of Iowa with B.A. and L.L.B. degrees in 1914 and '15. After practicing law in Waterloo for a year, and after being rejected by the Army for poor eyesight, Shillinglaw volunteered for overseas assignment with both the YMCA and the Red Cross. His diary, as presented by Holt, reveals his work-a-day world during the following three years and records his

response to the war and to the French culture he experienced. He traveled widely in France, judging the people he met by those standards he had brought out of Iowa, as they were modified by the wider world into which he moved.

Readers of this book will enjoy Shillinglaw's personal account and at the same time learn a good deal about certain aspects of the World War I era that have not found their way into other historical works.

"The Last Pony Mine" is a twenty-three minute, color motion picture produced by the Film Production Unit of Iowa State University, Ames. It records the passing of an era—the last days of a mine where men, often on their knees, cut and loaded coal and sturdy ponies hauled it out. Forty years ago, according to the film, longwall mines of the type shown were prevalent in Iowa but modern technology combined with changes in the economy have caused their obsolescence. The New Gladstone Mine near Centerville, Iowa, was closed in the spring of 1971; it has been preserved in this remarkable film which shows, not only the mining operation itself, but also the people whose lives had centered around the mine for decades. Their voices are heard on the soundtrack telling what the mining experience has meant to them. These are proud individuals; they recall to mind a life style that, along with the last pony mine, has ended.—Ed.

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